

# Australian Police Staff College

By Superintendent Denis McDermott,

The mission of the Australian Police College Staff College is to significantly improve the corporate performance and productivity of Australia's police organisations and public safety agencies by developing superior managers and executives.

Officially opened as the Australian Police College on October 25, 1960 by the Commonwealth Solicitor-General, the late Sir Kenneth Bailey CBE and became the Australian Police Staff College on December 5, 1986 by resolution of the Board of Control and was formally named by the Governor-General Sir Ninian Stephen AK, GCMG, GCVO, KBE at a ceremony held at the college in June 1987.

The APSC is governed by a board of control which comprises the commissioners of Australian police services and the secretary of the Attorney-General's Department.

The college provides senior management and executive development training at the national level for Australian police services and law enforcement agencies. On occasions other government agencies such as fire brigade and corrective services also are invited.

Since 1960, more than 4000 police have attended college courses including more than 1200 commissioned officers. Apart from Australia and New Zealand, course members have come from the USA, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Pacific nations, South East Asia and Africa.

Located at Manly in Sydney, the college provides an ideal environment for study being set in the natural bushland of North Head giving a panoramic view of Manly Waters.



Accommodation provided is motel-style with individual en-suite rooms. Meals are equivalent to that of a five-star restaurant and if a weight problem does not exist before arrival, it will by leaving — unless you are prepared to exercise regularly.

Presently a review is being undertaken with the view of reducing the length of courses offered by the college. However, at the moment, the following courses are conducted:

#### • Senior Police Executive Officers' Course

This is a six-week residential program intended for Level 4 members and above. The course is structured around main components of management seminars and case studies, forums on executive management issues, comparative reviews of organisations, corporate visits, analysis of policy issues and preparation of strategic policy papers.

The course is intended to improve the competency, ability and understanding of participants in a number of areas, including per-

sonal and organisational communications, executive leadership and decision making, financial management and strategic performance, outcome oriented strategic performance, outcome oriented strategic policy and social-political, economic and technological trends. It is usual that a member has attended the Police Management Development Program before this course.

#### • Police Management Development Program

This course was formerly known as the Senior Officers Course. It is an eight-week residential course intended for senior police managers.

It is structured around the main components of management theory and issues seminars, forums on issues in police management, operational command and strategic planning.

The course is designed to develop competencies in personal and organisational communications, executive decision making, analysis of critical issues, leadership and command, management skills and practices, understanding and ap-

preciation of contemporary management issues and the like.

#### • Senior Executives' Program

The concept of this two-week program is a new initiative. The program provides an opportunity for senior police executives to update their approach to management. Policing issues are identified and analysed within the context of a changing and more accountable political, social and economic environment and the contemporary challenges facing public sector managers are examined.

Each year the college offers one or two critical issues week-long seminars which generally produce a set of recommendations for consideration by the Australian police commissioners.

The critical issues seminars held in 1992 were *Understanding Police Accountability and Performance Measures in Law Enforcement*. There are no prescribed rank requirements for attendance at these seminars.

Regardless of the course attended at the APSC, the benefits are not only from the educational aspect but from those formed with colleagues from other services and the invaluable networking which results from this.

I was fortunate to attend the 43rd Senior Officers' Course in 1991 and question my reasons for not having taken the opportunity of attending earlier.

While the AFP has undergone considerable change in recent years, some of which we all find hard to accept, one only has to sit in a classroom at the college to comprehend fully the reasons for this change.

If you have not had the opportunity to attend a course at the college, I recommend you do so.

There is a limit to the numbers for each course. The following courses are scheduled for the first half of 1993:

**17th Senior Police Executive Officers' Course.** February 22 - April 2

**Critical Issues Seminar Public Order in Australia — A Police Perspective** April 26-30.

**47th Police Management Development Program.** May 10 - July 2.

# Undergraduates and officers share a learning experience

By Keith Livingston

**E**ARLIER this year, twenty-one undergraduates studying the degree course in Police Studies at the Philip Institute in Melbourne were permitted to work alongside operational police to 'get a feel' for the job.

The proposal to bring the undergraduates into the workplace for a period of 14 weeks generated a fair amount of scepticism amid suggestions it could be detrimental to operations.

There was, however, a degree of support also, as the arrangement had advantages for the AFP as well as undergraduates for a number of reasons.

The exercise proved to be truly beneficial from the AFP standpoint because it dispelled apprehensions held by a number of members that the undergraduates simply could not be 'accommodated' beside the working members.

Supervisors noted that as the 14 week period entered into the final few weeks the undergraduates were being regarded by many police as part of the team.

Many of the concerns expressed about the exercise had dissipated quite rapidly and the acceptance of the undergraduates was not only interesting but gratifying. One supervisor commented that the undergraduates' contribution was of great value to the organisation and their enthusiasm was also notable.

He cited one enthusiastic group whose members became so engrossed in their task that they insisted on working beyond the hours set for daily attendance so they could complete their assignment.

Where possible, the undergraduates did work which was necessary

to the flow of operational activity, rather than being used to do the photocopying and filing. There was, of course, an element of the latter duties involved over the introductory period. Those undergraduates who expressed concerns about performing these seemingly 'menial' tasks were advised that they are very much a part and parcel of the police officer's lot.

The long-held belief by many within the AFP that an academic, fresh from university can not be successfully placed into a policing role, if not dispelled, was certainly put on a very shaky foundation. Members could see at first hand that these young people wanted to be in the AFP.

As a result of the experiment, gone for the undergraduates was the expectation that the job is full of glitz, glamour and chasing crooks, day in day out. The truth of the matter soon came home to them that there is a great deal of mundane and fairly monotonous and routine duties to perform.

From the undergraduates' comments in their debriefing, they saw the experience as being of genuine benefit. They thought it was useful to not only feel they were part of the organisation, but were also seen to be part of the AFP too.

It was obvious that it was most important to them that they had developed a feeling of 'belonging'.

The program planners also believe these young people will return to the community with a far better understanding of police work and will become ambassadors for the organisation spreading the word about the AFP and its professionalism.